

**SLP PIPELINE
TURFHILL PARK, LIGHTWATER, SURREY**

**Objections of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens
Residents' Associations to the route of the
Southampton to Heathrow Pipeline across
Turfhill Park**

Presentation to the Examining Authority

NOVEMBER 2019

Table of Contents

		Page
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Executive Summary	5
3.	Consultation Process	7
	The Esso Consultation from Summer 2018 until January 2019	7
	The Esso Consultation from 7 th January until 14 th May 2019	7
	The Esso Statement of Community Consultation	9
	Other Aspects of Consultation	9
	The Role of Representative Organisations	10
4.	Comparison of the Environmental Damage and Biodiversity Net Gains and Losses	11
	Comparison of routes F1c and F1a+	11
	Route F1c	11
	Route F1a+	12
	Potential raising of the water table in Turfhill Park	14
	Potential reduction in noise abatement	15
	Damage to the roots of mature trees in residents' gardens	15
	The Chobham Common Comparison	16
	The Deepcut Section to the Red Road Comparison	16
5.	The Residents' and Lightwater Community's Concerns	17
6.	Engineering and Construction Issues	19
	An Optional route Opportunity	20
7.	Summary	22
8.	Appendices	24

1. Introduction

The selection of route F1a+ has caused great concern and anger amongst the residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens and the Lightwater community. This concern is apparent from the very substantial numbers of Interested Party registrations that the Planning Inspectorate has received from Lightwater residents.

More widely a number of national organisations and local representatives have also expressed their views which support the concerns and objections raised in this presentation.

Whilst Esso appears to have followed its process for consultation to the letter, it has been flawed in two aspects which have caused the need for this submission and all of the other representations to the Planning Directorate.

Firstly, Esso did not identify and therefore recognise the two legally registered bodies which represent the interests of the residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens thereby denying their researched and considered views to be heard during the 2018/19 Consultation Process.

Secondly, even though the change from F1c to F1a+ was listed in the 2019 Design Refinements Brochure, presumably because this was a 'material change', the reason given why the residents were not consulted about this, was that this was not deemed to be a 'material change' and therefore not a Design Refinement.

How a shift from a previously well tried and accepted route F1c, to essentially a new route, not F1a, F1b or F1c but a combination of F1a, F1b and a Folly section, that brings it to within 3 metres of domestic dwellings with major implications for the Environment, natural habitat and a well-used and enjoyed public amenity, defies logic.

It bears no resemblance to the example in the Design Refinements Brochure which defines a 'not material change' to be the movement of the pipeline route from one position in a farmer's field to another position in that same farmer's field.

Therefore, this determination by Esso, meant that no one in Lightwater was consulted, or even made aware of this change until well after the consultation period was over and until F1a+ was formally announced on 27th March 2019.

Shifting the route to F1a+, has a significant impact on the Environment and natural habitat as set out in the document. The biodiversity net loss on route F1a+ is so obviously many times greater than on F1c. The damage from F1a+ is major and permanent whereas the disturbance from F1c is manageable, minimal and short term.

This seems to all arise from the need to protect recently established sand lizards, which in the unlikely event that they are actually within any distance from the Order Limits for F1c, can be managed. As it is, the significant and permanent damage to the Environment and loss of amenity for the residents and community, is a high price to pay for the possible temporary loss of the habitat for these amphibians.

The residents and the communities' concerns over F1a+ have been expressed individually in significant numbers to the Planning Directorate. Their concerns are many and varied but all are genuine. This is nothing to do with Nimbyism, they are genuinely concerned about the damage to the Environment, loss of habitat and a dramatic spoiling of their Park. The residents and the local community have no concerns whatsoever over F1c.

Esso is maintaining that they have engineering issues with F1c and that F1a+ overcomes these issues. These issues do not seem to be irresolvable and the proposed solution to change to F1a+ would seem to cause greater and many more and complex challenges.

Extending the route along Red Road by a further 160 metres, seems a small price to pay for the alternative challenges of F1a+ and indeed, even this 160 metre extension could be avoided by using the path running alongside Red Road, within the Park.

Three pipelines have already been laid through the boggy area from an unimpeded track. F1a+ must run through the boggy area but also, has to negotiate through virgin woodland from the end of an existing narrow pathway, the trees bordering which, will need to be decimated.

This switch of route seems to have no logic to it and must arise from the stated belief by Esso that Turfhill Park is just a piece of woodland and did not justify any real consideration or investigation on the possible consequences. It represents an easy solution to satisfy Surrey County Council (SCC) requirements to mitigate the traffic disruption on Red Road.

Heronscourt Residents' Association (HCRA) and Colville Gardens Residents' Association (CGRA), representing the interest of its residents, respectfully request that The Planning Inspectorate give this presentation of its concerns and objections, its full and fair consideration.

2. Executive Summary

The HCRA and CGRA object to the route chosen for the Southampton to Heathrow Fuel Pipeline as it crosses Turfhill Park, Lightwater on the grounds that:

- Esso failed in its undertaking to consult with all Relevant Organisations and directly affected residents, and
- Esso has applied an unjustifiable balance to the many factors influencing their decision, and have chosen the wrong route.

Consultation Process

Heronscourt and Colville Gardens Residents' Associations are Relevant Organisations and are immediately adjacent to the proposed pipeline route. Esso has not recognised them as such, which has resulted in no opportunity at any stage throughout 2018/19 for proper representation of the concerns and objections of the Lightwater Community.

Despite Esso assuring all contacts that the chosen route would follow existing fuel and gas pipelines (Route F1c), in January 2019, they made a last-minute switch to a new route (F1a+F1b+new section). Esso then deemed the last-minute change to be 'not material' despite the requirements of its own process, thereby denying any opportunity to raise any objections.

HCRA & CGRA, are therefore, only at this late stage able to make their strong views known on behalf of the Residents and the local Community.

Environmental Damage and Biodiversity Net Gains and Losses

Esso confirms that it has not done any comparative studies of the damage to the Environment or the Natural Habitat between F1c and F1a+. It seems apparent that through the destruction of many trees during construction along F1a+, that there will be long term permanent damage to the Environment and the Natural Habitat. This compares to only a minimal short term disturbance to the Natural Habitat on F1c.

The Residents' and Lightwater Community's Concerns

The impact of the construction on residents and community are many and varied. Apart from their concerns over the damage to the Environment and the disruption and pollution during the construction period, the loss of trees increases the risks of flooding, noise and pollution levels. The safety of life and property is an issue through damage to roots in residents' gardens as is the massive detrimental visual impact to both Heronscourt and Colville Gardens Estates, if these trees are to be removed (Appendix 8.10a, 8.10b, 8.11a, 8.11b)

The community also has major concerns about the permanent damage to this very well used public amenity, particularly the decimation of the trees that border the only three tree lined pathways on Turfhill Park.

It is logical to HCRA and CGRA, that these reasonable objections justify rebalancing the route decision back to Route F1c. In January 2019, the change from F1c to F1a was deemed by Esso to be 'not material' therefore the same logic dictates that it is 'not material' to revert back to Route F1c and remain within the terms of the Application.

Engineering and Construction Issues

Esso has maintained that traffic disruption on the Red Road and the need to cross a boggy area on Turfhill Park are the two principal engineering reasons for deciding to shift the route to F1a+. Making the change avoids 160 metres of construction on the Red Road but not only causes all of the real problems identified but creates similar traffic problems on Guildford Road and blocks the main access to Turfhill Park. An alternative option which appears to overcome all of these problems is suggested.

All three of the existing pipelines were laid through the boggy area. Unless the Guildford Road crossing point is changed, so will this line.

However, the biggest concern must be the complexity of laying the line within the 15 metre Order Limits avoiding all bordering tree roots along all three pathways and an 8 inch strategic clean water main which runs the total length of F1a.

3. Consultation Process

The Planning Inspectorate has issued very helpful advice to applicants and respondents on the Planning Process, together with the importance of consultation at each key stage. It lays down who are mandatory consultees, and gives advice on 'Relevant Organisations and Bodies' which should also be consulted. It is the contention of both the HCRA and CGRA that they are both Relevant Organisations based upon their status as directly affected Limited Companies, and upon grounds of both proximity and impact. Esso's failure to identify, and then treat them as Relevant Organisations and its consequence, is the essence of the residents' anger at the consultation process.

The Esso Consultation from Summer 2018 until January 2019

From an early stage Esso planned carefully for the initial consultation and the documentation and process were well understood. The first stage consultation in late Summer 2018 was open and inclusive. Preparation for the second consultation stage in October 2018 was comprehensive and was conducted in an open manner. Further input was sought after this stage and several residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens submitted comments verbally and in writing.

Importantly, it was apparent to all concerned that in presentations and discussions at this stage, Esso's preferred option was to follow the route of the existing fuel and gas pipelines crossing Turfhill. Until the end of 2018, it was the understanding of everyone in Lightwater that the replacement pipeline would follow the simple direct route (referred to in Esso documentation as Route F1c). On 7th January 2019 notice was given by Esso to recipients that 'Design Refinements' were under consideration but two days later, after a meeting with Local Councillors in Windlesham, the Councillors were left with the clear impression that the pipeline would follow route F1c. As late as 6th February 2019, the County Councillor representing Lightwater assured the Surrey Heath MP, that the pipeline route would be uncontroversial.

The Esso Consultation from 7th January until 14th May 2019

From this point, consultation with members of HCRA and CGRA was blighted by three failures by Esso, namely:

1. Esso did not recognise HCRA and CGRA as Relevant Organisations. As a result, they received no communications on developments, and thus were given no opportunities to take part in the decision process.
2. Esso did not meet their own undertaking to inform and consult with all residents coming within 50 metres of the revised pipeline route. Heronscourt and Colville Gardens both lie within 50 metres of the recommended route.

3. Esso's own assessment that the change of route to F1a+, bringing it into close proximity to residences in Heronscourt and Colville Gardens, did not constitute a 'material change' was clearly wrong, and bound to cause a significant reaction.

From 7th January 2019 (the letter initiating Design Refinements) through to 21st January 2019 (the letter announcing the Refinements and drawing attention to the website listing changes) through to the Application to the Planning Inspectorate, residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens, and specifically the HCRA and CGRA received no communications from Esso, despite the fact that revised pipeline route F1a+ would pass within 50 metres, and potentially within 3 metres of their boundaries.

In their refinements presentation on *'How we are advertising the consultation'* Esso stated: *'We are writing to:*

- *Landowners and persons with interest in land affected by the refinements*
- *People on previous sub-options to let them know we are consulting on an alternative*

We'll send postcards and leaflets to people where we consider a refinement may have a wider impact on people living nearby'

None of these commitments materialised for the residents of Heronscourt or Colville Gardens, even though any sensitive organisation would realise that having a pipeline and a construction site on their boundaries is certainly material and that they would respond accordingly. The announcement of Route F1a+ on the SLP website on 27th March 2019 was a complete surprise to the HCRA, CGRA and all residents of Lightwater.

Additionally, when the route change was published, it was not made clear that Route F1a+ would entail the felling of a large number of trees, many of them mature, resulting in much environmental, landscape and amenity damage. In this respect the consultation could be considered at the very least as 'economical with the information'.

The change from F1c to F1a+ was reportedly made for engineering and environmental constraints. Both of these reasons are challenged later in this submission by the HCRA and CGRA, who were treated as neither Relevant Organisations, nor as residents living within 50 metres of the pipeline.

It has been stated in letters by Esso that consultation had been properly carried out in Autumn 2018 and, by inference, that residents had ample opportunity to comment. This completely ignores the fact that reservations were expressed at that stage by residents over Route F1a and in a tone that warranted a considered reply. This was not complacency on behalf of the community as it cannot be emphasised enough that up until 9th January 2019 everyone was of the opinion that the pipeline would follow the route of the existing pipelines.

The Esso Statement of Community Consultation

In their Application for Planning Permission, Esso had to file the Statement of Community Consultation. However, when seen, following the submission of the Application, it was a revelation to the residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens and to the Windlesham Parish Council that:

- In response to Advice Note 3 which states *'it may be necessary for the developer to carry out additional consultation in response to feedback from consultees or where a significant change is made to the project'* Esso state (6.2.4) *'As a result of this appraisal, it was considered that further consultation was not necessary ----- since they were not considered to materially change Esso's proposals or the impacts associated with its proposals'*. The change in route is considered 'material' by the HCRA, CGRA and all the users of the valued amenity that is Turfhill Park
- In the Esso Consultation Statement, the following paragraph appears: *'Some of these design refinements may have materially different impacts for landowners, the environment or communities ----- For these refinements we are seeking your views to make sure that we have selected the most appropriate route.'* Does this mean that at this stage, Esso are now willing to review their route option with HCRA and CGRA?
- Esso state *'However, Esso did ensure that all affected statutory consultees and local communities were informed of these amendments.'* Windlesham Parish Council were not informed, nor were any bodies in Lightwater – apart from the Curley Hill Residents' Association
- Esso state *'The final route was published in a booklet that was posted to residents living within 50 metres of the route together on 26th March 2019, alongside a double-sided map of the 97km pipeline route.'* This information was not received by residents of Heronscourt or Colville Gardens, nor by Windlesham Parish Council

Other Aspects of Consultation

The Chobham Society objected to the Chobham section of the route, on the grounds that it passed too close to dwellings (or even through them!). As a result, Esso changed this section to take it away from housing, and back into the Chobham Common SSSI which is internationally renowned as a habitat of many protected species.

For Turfhill Park, where the route was moved immediately adjacent to habitation, for which, a quoted reason was to *'avoid habitats of protected species'*, there was no similar consideration. This behaviour is directly contrary to that demonstrated for Chobham Common.

The Role of Representative Organisations

The contributions of Surrey County Council (SCC) and Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) did not facilitate consultation with their electorates, or ensure that they were informed of matters of material importance. They both appeared too ready to accept Esso's assessment of the route selection, without seeking the views of those directly affected by the new pipeline route.

The County Councillor, the Borough Councillors and the Windlesham Parish Council representing Lightwater were not made directly aware of the revised route until publication and the Parish Council received no direct invitation to comment on the proposals.

The residents have been informed that Esso were allowed to make their own assessments of whether a 'material change within the 200 metre corridor' warranted fresh consultation and of who were the Relevant Organisations to consult.

The categorisation of what is 'material' remained unchallenged and Esso, for their part, appeared eager to get 'an easy sign-off' on the Consultation. The County Council and Borough Council were primarily concerned with traffic issues and their replies to Esso made minimal reference to communities and the Environment.

The information that a large number of trees, many of them mature, could be lost, does not get a mention and the fact that Turfhill is a valuable amenity is barely considered. Faced with the fact that this is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), until the Application was submitted, the County and Borough Councils acted simply as statutory consultees, and not as elected representatives of the residents of Lightwater

For these reasons it is valid to conclude:

- Esso commenced the consultation on the SLP with well executed plans, but their failures since January 2019 have resulted in an angry response, too late to influence the route recommendation
- Esso's failures to recognise the status of HCRA and CGRA and not meeting their own commitment to communicate with affected residents, together with an erroneous assessment of what is 'material' contributed to a communications vacuum to HCRA and CGRA
- Most of Lightwater residents were not treated by their representative Councils as constituents whose interests should have been safeguarded
- The consequence of these combined failures is that the factually based views of the residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens were at no time given the opportunity to be aired in this important debate, prior to publication on 27th March 2019. These strongly-held views are based upon researched facts and detailed local knowledge, resulting in the firmly held opinion that Esso have chosen the wrong route to cross Turfhill Park

These consultation failures are an essential part of the objections of HCRA and CGRA to the pipeline route chosen to cross Turfhill Park.

4. Comparison of the Environmental Damage and Biodiversity net gains and losses between the routes

Esso knew of all of the ecological and technical issues in 2018 when they gave the strong impression that their preferred route was alongside the existing pipelines. This declared preference was maintained until early January 2019 when it changed to F1a+. However, the residents of Heronscourt, Colville Gardens and the Lightwater community were not made aware of this change until 27th March 2019. Esso was of the opinion that this change from F1c to F1a+ was not a 'material change' to the generally accepted and preferred option of F1c and deemed that it was therefore not necessary to consult with affected residents or their two residents' associations (Relevant Organisations).

By Esso's own admission in the meeting of 15th June 2019, in making this decision, it did not make any comparison of the pluses and minuses of the biodiversity impacts that would be caused by the construction between these two routes or the impact on the residents and the local community.

Esso has admitted that it has only done a desk study of F1b and F1c and then only using previous reports from Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group (SARG) indicating that sand lizards are in Unit 5 Turfhill Park. No field studies have been done on any of the three routes in Turfhill Park as was done for six other pipeline sites, except for a visit by two ecologists to identify suitable sites for rare reptiles in 2018. (Ref. Volume 6 Chapter 7 para 7.3.127). These sites of open heathland are not in the immediate vicinity of the existing pipelines.

Sand lizards, were only recently released in a small area of heathland in 2014. However, from Esso's own survey maps, sand lizards can be seen to occupy a number of areas in the Borough including the Country Park in Lightwater, Chobham Common, Deepcut and 80 or so were recently released in Farnborough. These, together with the presence of several species of nesting birds were given by Esso as one of the main reasons for their change of route preference.

Comparison of routes F1c and F1a+

Route F1c

This route is largely a hard-packed track, bordered by thick gorse on either side, with no mature trees. It is one of the main routes through the Park, used extensively by dog walkers, horse riders, cyclists etc., and also by heavy machinery required for the maintenance of Turfhill Park (Appendix 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7).

Sand lizards require clear heathland free of gorse, open areas in which to bask in the sun, and be far from daily disturbance. Para 7.4.184 of the Scoping Study re Rare Reptiles states

'The Order Limits in these areas have been designed to reduce impacts to heathland habitat by following the line of existing paths and tracks. These areas are generally unsuitable for reptiles as they have no vegetation and offer no shelter or protection. As such, construction works restricted to tracks and paths has a negligible risk of causing mortality or injury to rare reptiles'. They are extremely unlikely to be anywhere near route F1c, a fact confirmed by the Thames Valley Walkers.

Esso's aerial map of Turfhill Park (Appendix 8.12) shows sand lizards to be only in the release area which itself is approximately 60 metres separated from the existing pipelines by thick high gorse, ferns and bushes, as can be seen in the photo at Appendix 8.1. If considered necessary, this relatively small area could be fenced off during construction. If the sand lizards have spread out from this location, they would have followed the heathland area which extends north east from the release area and even further away from the existing pipelines. In any event, route F1c does not encroach into heathland habitat and if it did, the Scoping Report Chapter 7 para 7.4.188, states that *'the magnitude of change to reptile habitat would be negligible.....and as such, proposes this to be 'scoped out''*.

The listed nesting birds of concern have habitats widely distributed across Turfhill Park and those of most concern breed from March to August. As the proposed construction period is listed as October to January, Esso themselves state that *'for nesting birds, the potential for significant disturbance is of negligible magnitude and negligible significance'* (Ref Volume 6 Chapter 7 para 7.5.233).

In the unlikely event that sand lizards are actually on route F1c, the biodiversity impact of using this route would be only a short-term temporary disturbance of the natural habitat along a narrow strip of land and could be managed by recognised techniques. There would be little or no environmental damage.

Route F1a+

It is obvious that the present Order Limits for construction along the three main pathways of Turfhill Park, will result in a very significant number of trees being removed, giving rise to serious environmental consequences. It is understood from Esso's drawings that as the final segment of F1a+ runs down a path running alongside the Guildford Road which stops about 2/3^{rds} of the way along, a route will have to be carved out from virgin woodland, leading to even more destruction.

An estimate of the number of trees affected, from walking these three pathways, runs into hundreds, despite Esso's Scoping Report Chapter 7 para 7.4.162, stating that *'However, felling trees will be avoided where practicable and there would not be a significant reduction in trees as a result of the Project'*.

The report on the Arboricultural Survey by Jacobs carried out in July 2019 is now available. However, this does not provide any estimates of the overall number of trees that will be affected and fails to make any mention of any being affected on the section running alongside the Guildford Road or by the creation of Esso's site compound.

It would seem that Esso's appointed pipeline contractor will determine the trees to be removed when developing the detailed construction plan for laying the line within the Order Limits for this route.

It seems apparent that the Contractor will not only have to negotiate the roots of mature trees on either side of the 15 metre Order Limits but also an 8 inch strategic clean mains water line that runs the majority of F1a+. If the Easement for this water line is to be respected, then the Contractor will only have at best, a 4 to 5 metre area to construct and lay this pipeline and create subsequent major future problems with close and parallel Easements.

Presently, it would seem that Esso has no knowledge of this line and even Affinity Water cannot identify its exact position along F1a+. Appendix 8.13 shows the route of this line and the size of the lake referred to later.

If Esso is able to extend its Order Limits for this section, away from the Easement of the water line, then it will drive them deep into the woodland bordering F1a+ and the further destruction of many more trees to the existing estimates.

Whatever the eventual number of trees to be felled, it must be stated that the removal of any significant number of trees:

- will be completely against the need, specified in SHBC's 2014 Park Management Plan, '*to maintain a 40 to 70 metre tree belt around the perimeter of the site to shield it from nearby roads and housing*'. This tree belt contains a host of mature, if not ancient, Scots Pines, one of only three native conifers to the UK, some of which will be impacted by the use of route F1a+;

and flies in the face of:

- the Government's declared intent to plant more trees including funding £10m for this purpose
- the Environmental Board Member for SCC, declaring a Climate Emergency and stating that '*trees are invaluable in reducing pollution, noise levels and protecting land from flooding*'
- the statement on Mitigation para 4.3.10 of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report which states that they will '*avoid individual or groups of trees and use existing tracks*' which is exactly what F1c does.

It is encouraging to note that the Chairman of Surrey Heath Tree Wardens has written expressing the same conclusions represented in this document. Nevertheless, if Esso is allowed to use route F1a+, the following possible outcomes can be expected:

- the removal of so many trees will have a significant and permanent detrimental impact on the Environment by reduction not only on the carbon dioxide take up by the trees but by the release of trapped carbon in the adjacent soil
- the permanent loss of habitat and possible destruction of bats and adders, both 'scoped in' protected species shown to be on this route through Esso's own aerial photographs (Appendix 8.12) and the many forms of flora abundant in these wooded pathways
- the raising of the water table in Turfhill Park significantly increasing the already known high risk of flooding to the bordering Estates
- the reduction in noise abatement from Red Road and from the new overfly routes from Heathrow
- the damage to the roots of mature trees in residents' gardens bordering the route with the consequent need to either remove them or leave potentially unstable trees in situ, risking life and property in the future

The first two points are self-explanatory, but in more detail on the other points:

Potential for raising the water table in Turfhill Park

Paragraph 5.3.5 of the Preliminary Environment Information Report quotes the British Geological Society Report that '*the Colony Bog site has high ground water dependency in the North end which overlaps with areas susceptible to flooding*'. However as confirmed in the Scoping Report Volume 1 paragraph 8.3.92, Turfhill Park was part of the 6.3% of the study area not assessed for susceptibility to groundwater flooding.

The water table of Turfhill Park is high and is deemed a high-risk area for flooding. In fact, Heronscourt and Colville Gardens share a large man-made lake (see Appendix 8.13) to minimise this risk. This lake is fed by a stream and several aquifers, all running down from Turfhill Park and directly across Route F1a+.

In 2007 the lake was unable to cope with the volume of water running off Turfhill Park during some extremely inclement weather and flooded the Riverside Estate across the Guildford Road.

Hence, the removal of any significant number of trees and any disturbance of the aquifers, will greatly enhance the risk of further significant flooding, which already occurs occasionally to many back gardens of both the two adjacent Estates, even under present weather conditions. It is predicted that adverse weather events in both summer and winter will increase both in frequency and severity in future years and even the removal of a small number of trees will exacerbate the risk of flooding.

It is interesting to note that no mention is made in Volume 1 Chapter 8 of Esso's Scoping Study, of the possible increase in flood risk to the area due to the removal of trees, it only considers the impact of local water conditions on the construction process.

Potential reduction in noise abatement

Noise levels from the major link, Red Road, continue to increase as more and more housing developments are completed. For example, the Deepcut Barracks development of 1,200 dwellings will be completed in 2020, releasing a very substantial increase to traffic onto the Red Road. Added to that is a further substantial increase in noise from aircraft flying the new western departure routes out of Heathrow. Whilst it is accepted that little can be done about these factors, the removal of any trees in Turfhill Park, with their noise abatement qualities, will increase noise levels significantly.

Damage to the roots of mature trees in residents' gardens

More than 50 mature trees are situated in residents' gardens directly bordering F1a+. Their roots extend well into the planned Easement and clearance area, deemed necessary to construct the pipeline. The Forestry Commission guidelines for the extent of these roots would indicate an average distance of 3 to 5 metres for trees in these gardens. Esso has indicated only recently, an obvious change of mind, that it is now their intention to lay the line on the south side of F1a+. If this does not occur, they have two choices:

- run the pipeline well away from the roots, significantly reducing the clearance area for construction,

or, as has been stated,

- 'managing' the roots which must risk weakening them. Owners will then have a choice of having the trees removed or running the risk that the weakened trees, at some time in the future, will fall on their properties causing injury or death and substantial damage.

Neither of these options are acceptable to property owners, who object to the possibility of the loss of their mature trees, both for the extreme detrimental visual impact upon their personal Environment (Appendix 8.10a, 8.10b, 8.11a, 8.11b) or for an ever-present concern about the safety of their families and property.

The photos of the woodland affected by the selection of F1a+ and that of F1c (Appendix 8.4 and 8.7 compared with Appendix 8.3) succinctly illustrates the case for and against these two routes. Three tree lined pathways versus one pathway with practically no trees. It also shows the pathway inside Turfhill Park running alongside Red Road which seems to offer another attractive option for all concerned parties.

The Chobham Common Comparison

Esso carried out extensive ecological surveys across this SSSI and confirmed in their documents, that the whole area is populated with many protected species, specifically including sand lizards and Dartford Warblers. It showed that sand lizards and other protected reptiles are present on the route of the existing pipeline through the Common.

For these ecological reasons, they decided to plan a route away from the existing pipelines to one which ran close to domestic dwellings. This change was presented to the local Community and the Chobham Society during the 2018 consultations and was met with some derision and with similar objections to those now being raised for Turfhill Park.

The Lightwater Community had no such Representative Organisation recognised by Esso then (or now) and therefore had no similar opportunity at that time to present any considered and researched objections. It is fair to say, that at that time, many of the residents did not give serious thought to the many issues that this route would raise, given Esso's stated preference for route F1c.

As a result of the Chobham Society's resistance, Esso relented and reverted to the existing pipeline route despite the known presence of sand lizards and many other protected species.

They have duly applied for a license from Natural England, which will seek to grant them carte blanche to manage, move, disturb, exclude, damage or destroy the sand lizards and their habitat. Thereby, they are accepting a role to manage the protected species, and could do so at Turfhill Park, an area where sand lizards are less well established than Chobham Common.

The Deepcut Section to the Red Road Comparison

Aerial photos clearly show the presence of sand lizards on the chosen route for the replacement pipeline through this area (Appendix 8.12). This and the Chobham Common rethink, raises very serious questions over Esso's statement that the protection of sand lizards is of 'critical consideration' and one of the single biggest reason for changing the route through Turfhill Park.

In summary by using route F1a+, there will be a very significant biodiversity net loss through the permanent long-term damage to the natural habitat and to the Environment. This stark picture needs to be compared to the short term, temporary disturbance of the natural habitat on route F1c, with a minimal short-term biodiversity net loss and no damage to the Environment.

There can be no reason, given the biodiversity net loss comparison between the two routes F1a+ and F1c, for the same solution to be applied for the Turfhill Park route as has been for Chobham Common.

5. The Residents' and Lightwater Community's Concerns

The level of concern felt by the Lightwater Community as a whole is demonstrated by the very significant number of individuals who have applied for and been accepted as Interested Parties. Out of the 262, individuals and businesses accepted as Interested Parties for the total length of the Esso Pipeline, 67 are from the Lightwater Community.

There are no concerns about the integrity of the pipeline and the residents accept that it is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. However, they are greatly concerned and angered about:

- the permanent damage to the Environment by the destruction of many trees and to the natural habitat of bats and adders
- the increase in flood risk
- the increased noise levels from the Red Road and over-flying aircraft
- the risk of damage to residents' trees and consequent safety issues
- turning all three of the heavily tree lined paths through Turfhill Park (F1a+ new section) enjoyed daily by the community, into barren dirt tracks. An unforgivable and unnecessary destruction of a beautiful community amenity (Appendix 8.5, 8.6, 8.7)
- losing the beautiful backdrop of mature trees to Heronscourt and Colville Gardens Estates which would have a massive visual impact for all residents and lead to a reduction in their property values (Appendix 8.10a, 8.10b, 8.11a, 8.11b)
- the problem of anyone having to sell their property during the two years plus of planning and construction
- the increased daily traffic noise, air pollution, dust, vibration and visual disruption for the residents and local communities during the construction period, advised by Esso to be six months
- the traffic chaos for at least six months on the Guildford Road by the movement of contractors' vehicles, 40ft pipe carriers and heavy plant in and out of the main entrance to Turfhill Park
- the elimination of the only facility for car parking and the denial of access through the main entrance to Turfhill Park for the local community's daily users, and in emergencies, the Fire Service
- Esso's complacency in regarding Turfhill Park (an SSSI site) as just 'an area of woodlands' as stated in their Statement of Reason, Section 4, para 4.7.2, without any need to carry out any meaningful studies of the issues involved

- Esso's total lack of consideration, forethought or respect, bordering on arrogance, for the impact that this last-minute change of route would have on the residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens Estates and the local community by deeming the change 'not material'. It is a new route (F1b, the new section and F1a) bringing new issues into focus for the community and bears no comparison to the example shown in the Design Refinements brochure where a 'not material change' relates to a route being moved from one side of a field to another. Esso was aware of the objections raised about F1a in the 2018 consultations but continued to ignore the real impact that this change would have on the community. Nevertheless, Esso despite being aware of the objections to this route, still submitted their Project Plan to the Planning Inspectorate, thus avoiding any opportunity for consultation on what was obviously a very sensitive matter.

The residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens and the wider local community cannot believe they were not given the opportunity to make their objections known at the Design Refinements Consultations and have many, genuine and valid objections to the route F1a+.

To avoid all of the above negative impacts, Esso can, within the Terms of the Application, make a 'not material' change to the route, by adopting the same approach as for Chobham Common and returning to their initially preferred route of F1c.

6. Engineering and Construction Issues

Esso have stated in their '*Statement of Community Consultation*', and in subsequent communications that: '*----route F1c was deselected for environmental and engineering constraints*'.

So many aspects of this statement seem counter-intuitive to the members of HCRA and CGRA, that it is felt necessary to challenge the benefits. HCRA and CGRA have not commissioned a detailed study, but have in their number, retired senior, experienced directors and managers from the oil and petrochemical industries and the civil engineering industry. The environmental issues have been handled elsewhere in this submission. The following matters of engineering and construction content are challenged by HCRA and CGRA as follows:

- the chosen route, known as F1a+ is over 400 metres longer than the existing direct route (F1c) across Turfhill Park and has 4 or 5 changes of direction requiring a number of bends. Installing bends adds time and will take out more land and require the felling of even more trees. Coupled with the complexities of this route, highlighted below, this must mean extending the construction period and increasing the cost. It also means unnecessarily extending the period of disturbance to residents and users of this public amenity and the extent of environmental and ecological destruction

Route F1c is a straight line across Turfhill Park with only one change of angle and presents none of these problems.

- F1a+ presents complexities that F1c does not. Within its 15 metre Order Limits, it needs to negotiate the roots of 100/200 mature trees which encroach on the Order Limits by 3 to 5 metres from both sides for the total length of this route. But even more importantly, an 8 inch strategic clean water main runs the entire length of F1a. As a minimum (and the exact route of this line is not presently known) its Easement extends 6.5 to 7 metres into Esso's Order Limits. With the SLP requiring an Easement of 3 metres on either side, 5 metres remain to dig the trench and construct the pipeline

It would seem unlikely that Affinity Water, the Utility Supplier, would prejudice the integrity of their line by allowing construction activities to progress above and along its total length of F1a. However, if that were to happen, it would result in two parallel Easements running, as a maximum, 1 metre apart, severely complicating the ability of either party to maintain or respond to emergencies

It seems extraordinary, that one year after the start of consultation, and over 6 months after submitting the planning Application, Esso had made no effort to discuss this important main with Affinity Water.

- The terrain is extremely important in three areas of Turfhill Park. F1a+ passes through an area of high water table and flood risk, which will be greatly exacerbated if a significant number of trees are removed along this route and the existing aquifers, damaged

In contrast, more than 80% of F1c crosses hard sand with clay layers, with no risk of causing future flooding to any of the surrounding areas.

- Esso maintains that one of the objections to using F1c is the need to cross the 'boggy area' despite the fact that both of their existing lines and a high-pressure gas line were constructed through this area. Without sight of any detailed drawings, it seems apparent from the available drawings and by walking the route along the Guildford Road, that the new route also crosses the 'boggy area' (Appendix 8.9)

However, F1a+ also needs to navigate an area of virgin woodland to reach its crossing point, which is expected to take longer and with all the commensurate shuttering and safety issues. The direct crossing of this area, afforded by F1c, must be quicker and less complex than this.

- Esso also maintains that a further reason for changing to F1a+ was the pressure from SCC to minimise traffic disruption along the Red Road. As planned presently, F1a+ will progress down Red Road for 180 metres and then turn left onto a new 130 metre section along a narrow, heavily tree lined pathway called The Folly (Appendix 8.4), to join up with F1a, causing another major destruction of trees. This, at the expense of laying a further 160 metres of pipeline along the Red Road.

It appears obvious to HCRA and CGRA, that the saving of the extra time taken to lay 160 metres of pipeline on the Red Road pales into insignificance compared to the very significant consequences that result from this decision.

An Optional Route Opportunity?

HCRA and CGRA do not understand why Esso appears not to have considered, what seems to be an obvious option and very minor change for the section of line from the Red Road, which runs along the Red Road but inside the Park along a virtually tree-less, well compacted pathway, all the way to meet the F1c route.

It would seem, therefore, there is an Optional Route opportunity which runs from Point A to B and on to C to D on the attached illustrative map (Appendix 8.14).

This option would:

- be well away from the sand lizard release site and would not impinge upon likely nesting sites for protected birds
- remove the need to destroy a large number of trees and avoid all of the damage to the Environment and natural habitat resulting from the use of F1a+
- completely allay all of the residents and community concerns caused by the use of F1a+

- satisfy SCC's traffic concerns on Red Road
- significantly shorten and dramatically simplify the route through Turfhill Park.

This change of route would not constitute a 'material change' within the terms of the Esso Application.

There are many other issues about disruption by heavy plant and machinery, working areas and access to the site, but as neither HCRA nor CGRA have seen a construction plan, meaningful comment is not yet possible.

Thus, it seems quite obvious to HCRA and CGRA, that in selecting F1a+, Esso has introduced extraordinary complications to the pipelay process, with commensurate damage to the local Environment and ecology, rather than select the simple, direct route that was their strongly inferred preference until early January 2019.

Above all, it has to find a solution to accommodating the water pipe line.

In comparison F1c is uncomplicated and together with the alternative option suggested in this document avoids SCC's concerns over traffic disruption on the Red Road and does not encroach on areas believed to be populated by sand lizards.

It is for these sound practical reasons that HCRA and CGRA are challenging this decision, and seek a non-material change (within the terms of the Esso Application) back to Route F1c.

7. Summary

The selection of route F1a+ has caused great concern and anger amongst the Residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens and the Lightwater Community. This concern is apparent from the very substantial numbers of Interested Party registrations that the Planning Inspectorate has received from Lightwater residents.

More widely a number of national organisations and local representatives have also expressed their views which support the concerns and objections raised in this presentation.

Whilst Esso appears to have followed its process for consultation to the letter, it has been flawed in two aspects which have caused the need for this submission and all of the other representations to the Planning Directorate.

Firstly, Esso did not identify and therefore recognise the two legally Registered Bodies which represent the interests of the Residents of Heronscourt and Colville Gardens thereby denying their researched and considered views to be heard during the 2018/19 Consultation Process.

Secondly, even though the change from F1c to F1a+ was listed in the 2019 Design Refinements Brochure, presumably because this was a 'material change', the reason given why the Residents were not consulted about this, was that this was not deemed to be a 'material change' and therefore not a Design Refinement.

How a shift from a previously well tried and accepted route F1c, to essentially a new route, not F1a, F1b or F1c but a combination of F1a, F1b and a Folly section, that brings it to within 3 metres of domestic dwellings with major implications for the Environment, natural habitat and a well-used and enjoyed public amenity, defies logic.

It bears no resemblance to the example in the Design Refinements Brochure which defines a 'not material change' to be the movement of the pipeline route from one position in a farmer's field to another position in that same farmer's field.

Therefore, this determination by Esso, meant that no one in Lightwater was consulted or even made aware of this change until well after the consultation period was over, and until F1a+ was formally announced on March 27th 2019.

Shifting the route to F1a+, has a significant impact on the Environment and natural habitat as set out in the document. The biodiversity net loss on route F1a+ is so obviously many times greater than on F1c. The damage from F1a+ is major and permanent whereas the disturbance from F1c is manageable, minimal and short term.

This seems to all arise from the need to protect recently established sand lizards, which in the unlikely event that they are actually within any distance from the Order Limits for F1c, can be managed. As it is, the significant and permanent damage to the Environment and loss of amenity for the Residents and Community, is a high price to pay for the possible temporary loss of the habitat for these amphibians.

The Residents and the Communities' concerns over F1a+ have been expressed individually in significant numbers to the Planning Directorate. Their concerns are many and varied but all are genuine.

This is nothing to do with Nimbyism, they are genuinely concerned about the damage to the Environment, loss of habitat and a dramatic spoiling of their Park.

The Residents and the local Community have no concerns whatsoever over F1c.

Esso is maintaining that they have engineering issues with F1c and that F1a+ overcomes these issues.

These issues do not seem to be irresolvable and the proposed solution to change to F1a+ would seem to cause greater and many more and complex challenges.

Extending the route along Red Road by a further 160 metres, seems a small price to pay for the alternative challenges of F1a+ and indeed, even this 160 metre extension could be avoided by using the path running alongside Red Road within the Park.

Three pipelines have already been laid through the boggy area from an unimpeded track. F1a+ must run through the boggy area but also, has to negotiate through virgin woodland from the end of an existing narrow pathway, the trees bordering which, will need to be decimated.

This switch of route seems to have no logic to it and must arise from the stated belief by Esso that Turfhill Park is just a piece of woodland and did not justify any real consideration or investigation on the possible consequences. It represents an easy solution to satisfy SCC requirements to mitigate the traffic disruption on Red Road.

The HCRA and CGRA, representing the interest of its residents, respectfully request that The Planning Inspectorate give this presentation of its concerns and objections, its full and fair consideration.

8. Appendices

8.1 Ariel View of Turfhill Park

8.2 Route of Existing Esso Pipelines Across Turfhill Park

8.3 Route of Existing Esso Pipelines Across Turfhill Park

8.4 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Across The Folly

8.5 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath & Car Park

8.6 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath & Car Park

8.7 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath

8.8 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Adjacent to Guildford Road

8.9 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Across 'Boggy Area'

8.10a Heronscourt Current Backdrop

8.10b Heronscourt Backdrop Image With Trees Removed

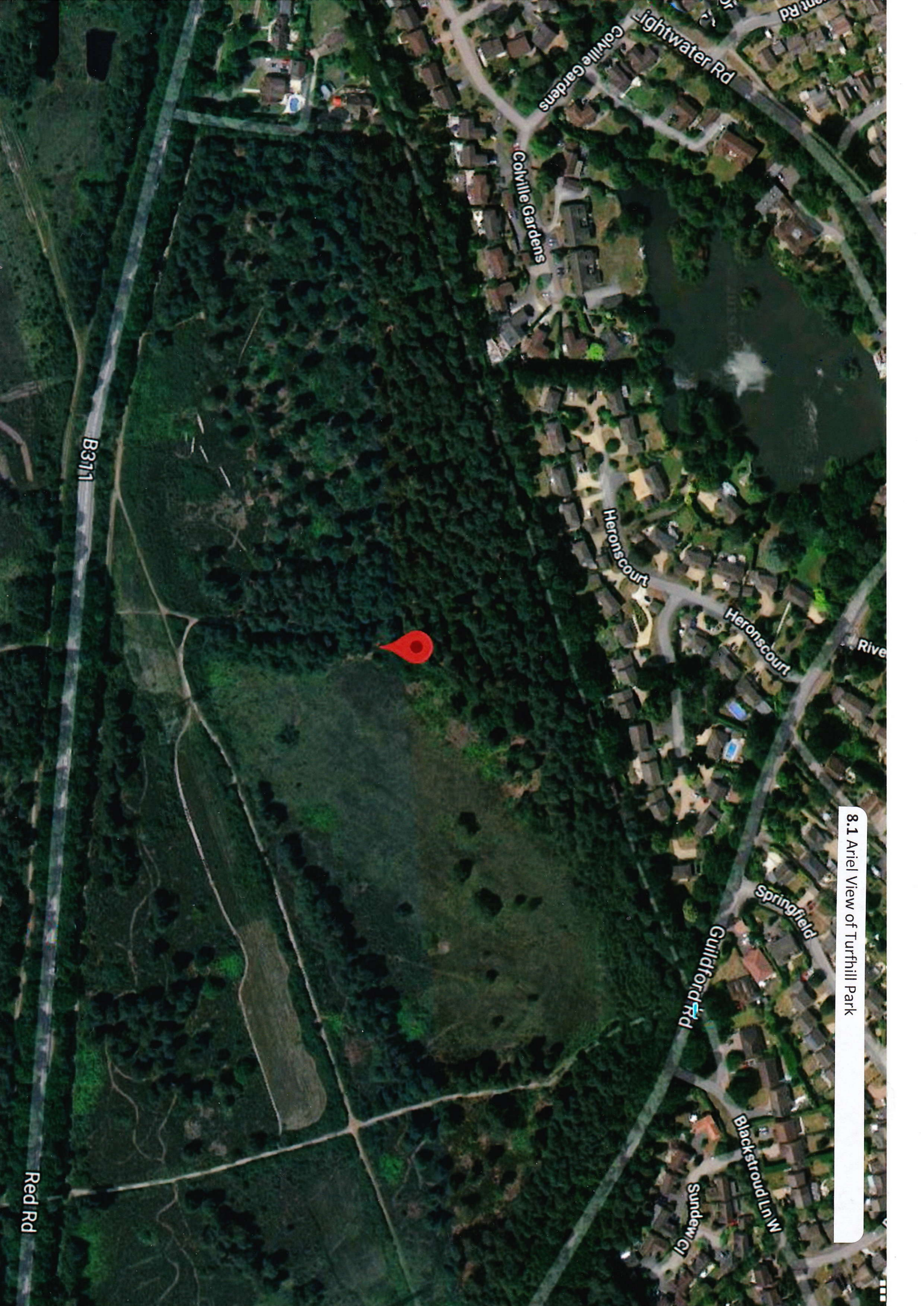
8.11a Colville Gardens Current Backdrop

8.11b Colville Gardens Backdrop Image With Trees Removed

8.12 Esso Aerial map of Turf Hill Park

8.13 Map of Affinity Water Pipeline

8.14 Alternative Route Illustration – HCRA Prepared



8.1 Aerial View of Turfhill Park



8.3 Route of Existing Esso Pipelines Across Turfhill Park





8.4 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Across The Folly





8.5 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath & Car Park





8.6 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath
& Car Park

8.7 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Along Bridlepath





8.8 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Adjacent to Guildford Road



8.9 Route of Proposed and Selected Pipeline Across 'Boggy Area'





8.10a Heronscourt Current Backdrop



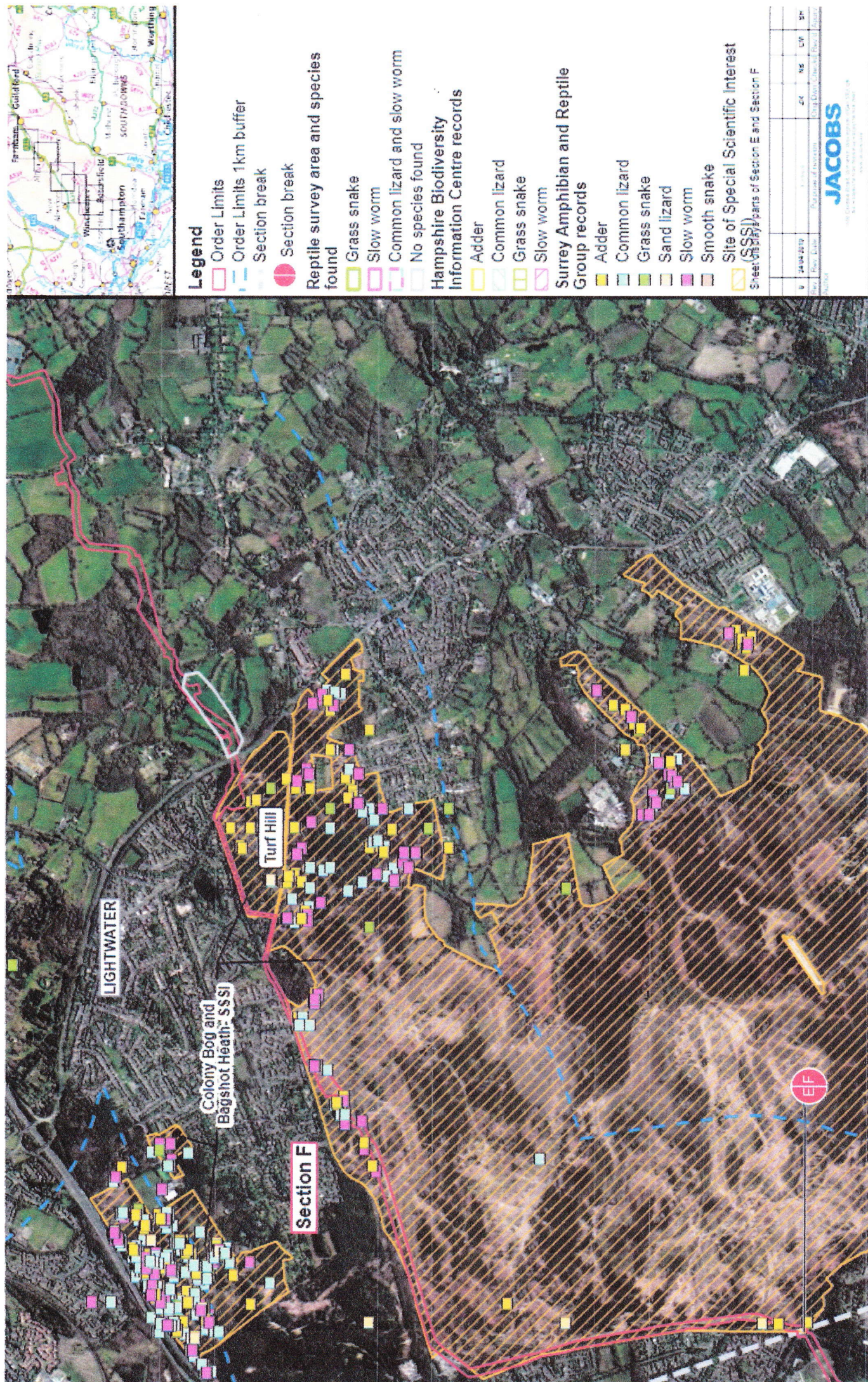
8.10b Heronscourt Backdrop Image With Trees Removed



8.11a Colville Gardens Current Backdrop



8.11b Colville Gardens Backdrop Image With Trees Removed





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Distribution Main	Hydrant
Asbestos Distribution Main	Fitting
Abandoned Main	Easement
Asbestos Abandoned Main	Company Boundary
Adit / Tunnel	
Cable	



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This map was created by the Affinity Water Geographical Analysis Team, Tamblin Way, Hatfield, AL10 9EZ

8.14 Alternative Route Illustration – HCRA Prepared

